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LETTER DATED 20 MAY 1993 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to submit, enclosed herewith, a letter by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Nikica Valentic, addressed to you.

I would be grateful if you would provide for the distribution of this letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladimir DROBNJAK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Letter dated 19 May 1993 from the Prime Minister of Croatia addressed to the Secretary-General

On 21 January 1993, the Vice Prime Ministers of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Mate Granic and Mr. Vladimir Seks, sent a letter to the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, where they focused their attention on the fact that the "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" was outmanoeuvring the obligations taken in the international agreements ("Agreement on the Exchange of Captured Persons"), that had been concluded between the Republic of Croatia and the "FR of Yugoslavia", with the participation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (the first agreement was concluded on 6 November 1991; later agreements were: Sarajevo, 11 February 1992; Pecs, Hungary, 20 March 1992; Geneva, Switzerland, 28-29 July 1992, 7 August 1992, 18 October 1992; Budapest, Hungary, 16 December 1992).

In this letter, the Vice Prime Ministers of the Republic of Croatia kindly asked Mr. Cyrus Vance and Lord David Owen to use all their authority and influence to exert urgent political pressure and take steps towards the authorities of the "FR of Yugoslavia", in order that the internationally assumed obligations be fulfilled that on the strength of recognized and established principles, the exchange of all captured persons be carried out. They also suggested that after the current problem of the exchange of prisoners has been completed, a joint committee, within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, be organized, which would finally and systematically resolve the problems of missing persons and persons forcefully dislodged.

Being aware of Your Excellency's experience and authority, the Vice Prime Ministers of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Mate Granic and Mr. Vladimir Seks, addressed a letter to you, on 2 February 1993, which asked for your engagement in the implementation of the following:

- An immediate and unconditional release and exchange of the prisoners, persons who have been forcefully apprehended and captured or Croatians who have been criminally sentenced (in accordance with international agreements);

- UNPROFOR protection of all mass grave sites discovered in the occupied areas of the Republic of Croatia, in compliance with data submitted to the United Nations;

- The formation of a special committee, under the auspices of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, which would systematically and once and for all determine the fate of all the persons missing during the aggression against the Republic of Croatia.

In spite of numerous contacts and efforts by the international community to resolve the said issues and furthermore in spite of Your Excellency's plea and the pleas of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Co-Chairmen of

the Conference on the Former Yugoslavia to resolve the problems concerning the exchange of captured persons, the issue has remained at a standstill. According to a report by the ICRC, the persons on the list of prisoners, who should have been exchanged as early as 14 August 1992 in Nemetin, are being kept in Serbian prisons, under extremely poor conditions. Some people's health is in critical condition, while one prisoner has died.

A special burden for the Government and the inhabitants of the Republic of Croatia is the fact that the "FR of Yugoslavia" will not present to the Croatian public or to the international community any data concerning Croats forcefully apprehended in cities where Croats suffered grave tribulations, such as Vukovar, Borovo Naselje, Drnis and other places. The "FR of Yugoslavia" (Serbia and Montenegro) should be made aware of their responsibility for genocide and the mass number of victims resulting from their aggression and occupation of the Republic of Croatia. Since they cannot confess to this because the war and their aggression continues, their oppression is exerted upon the hundreds of detained Croats, who are imprisoned and exposed to harshly toilsome forced labour. The families of these prisoners and the mass population of the Republic of Croatia are severely distressed over these conditions and are tolerating them with utter strength and patience.

I am consequently free to once again urge Your Excellency to use your prestige and influence to compel the "FR of Yugoslavia" to fulfil without any further delay the internationally assumed obligations, so that the exchange of captured persons may be administered immediately, as required by the established and recognized rules of conduct. I also ask that using your prestige you pressure the international community to form a mechanism for more efficiently finding the missing persons and those forcefully apprehended and which would assist in identifying the murdered victims in the mass graves.

(Signed) Nikica VALENTIC
Prime Minister